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[www.fosteringthecommunity.org](http://www.fosteringthecommunity.org)

**TESTIMONY ON SB310**

**AN ACT REQUIRING THE COMMISSIONER OF  
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TO SUBMIT A REPORT ON CASEWORKER  
RETENTION AND PERMANENCY OUTCOMES.**

via email to [kidtestimony@cga.ct.gov](mailto:kidtestimony@cga.ct.gov)

By: Katherine Pierce

UConn Psychological Sciences Scholar, Fostering The Community Intern

March 3rd, 2022

Dear Chairman Anwar, Chairwoman Linehan, Vice Chairwoman Welander, Ranking Member Senator Kelly, Ranking Member Representative Dauphinais, and Distinguished Members of the Connecticut General Assembly Children Committee:

I am writing to testify in strong support of SB310. Thank you for allowing me to participate in the important discussion of this bill.

I began providing childcare for children in the foster care system in late 2020, during which I was introduced to the foster care system and saw many systematic gaps that needed bridging to improve childhood outcomes. One important area that was of particular concern to me is the social worker turnover and permanency rate.

While delivering child care to children in the foster care system to children who have had extended questions around their permanency, I have seen firsthand the stress and struggle that is associated with this. Children are stressed about their identities; they are concerned about not feeling like a child, but a foster child.

Working with and supporting Fostering the Community's mission has provided me with valuable insight into the importance of permanency and security of families and their pronounced impact on the safety and wellbeing of children, no matter the age.

The evidence is clear. When children in the system are first assigned to a social worker, their chances of finding a permanent home is 74.5%. If/ When their case is "handed off" to the next social worker within the first year, their chances decrease substantially, to 17.5%. (Flower, McDonald, Sumski, 2005).

One study was done by the Florida Institute for Child Welfare, which explores the youth's perspective of this issue. It identified that social worker turnover disrupted stability and their chances of permanency. Youth also identified that their sense of trust was lost, reinforcing their hostility and mistrust with adults. (Strolin-Goltzman, Kollar, Trinkle, 2010).

We know that mental health everywhere has suffered greatly due to the uncertainty that comes with the circumstances of the current pandemic.

Certainly, children in the foster care system constantly have an uncertainty of what comes tomorrow; not knowing where they'll be or who will be providing care for them.

It is the State of Connecticut's responsibility to provide more adequate monitoring of social worker turnout within the system to save more children.

This bill will ensure children are not robbed of their childhood because of the social worker injustices within the foster care system.

They are only given one childhood, and there are no second chances.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for your consideration.*Katherine Pierce*  
UConn Psychological Sciences scholar- Fostering The Community Intern